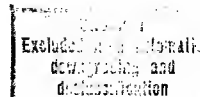CONFIDENTIAL

DEPICTION OF THE SOUTH VIETNAM -- LAOS BOUNDARY ON US MAPS

The delineation of the South Vietnam -- Laos boundary differs on certain map sheets published in the United States. In question are sheets NE 48-16, ND 48-4, and ND 48-8 of Army Map Service (AMS) Series L509, first and second editions, and the corresponding sheets of the Air-Ground Charts (AGC) published by the Aeronautical Chart and Information Center (ACIC) on which the depiction of the boundary is identical to that on the second edition of the AMS series.

Inquiry reveals that the delineation of the South Vietnam -- Laos boundary as depicted on the map sheets of the AMS L509 second edition and on the ACIC charts is taken from the French 1:100,000 series maps published between the 1930's and early 1950's and is considered to be the most accurate of any shown on available maps. The South Vietnam -- Laos boundary as shown on the map sheets of AMS L509, first edition, published during the mid-1950's, was compiled chiefly from the French series, Carte Routière de l'Indochine, 1:400,000, which was published in the early 1950's. The Army Map Service and the Geographer of the Department of State now consider that the delineation of the South Vietnam -- Laos boundary as shown on the French series at 1:400,000 and on the first edition of AMS L509 is grossly inaccurate in some sections. Concern

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ever possible further use of this edition is largely academic, however, since distribution stocks of the map sheets were destroyed upon issuance of the second edition.

It should also be noted that:

1. The Army Map Service is preparing to compile and publish a third edition of the L509 map series. First sheets are tentatively scheduled for 1965.

2. The delineation of the South Vietnam -- Laos boundary as shown on the 1:100,000 series maps published since 195? by the National Geographical Service of Viet-Nam is considered by AMS to be less accurate than the delineation on the older French series at 1:100,000.

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